

REMARKS

A reconsideration is requested of Claims 1-6, wherein Claim 1 has been amended.

As an initial matter, Claims 1-6 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which Applicants regard as the invention. As a result, Applicants have amended Claim 1 to remove the informalities noted by the Examiner. However, with regard to the Examiner's argument that the "bead" needs additional structure, Applicants respectfully disagree. In particular, the bead is described as being annular and also projecting beyond the contact-making surface. Applicants submit that this is sufficient structure for purposes of definiteness. Accordingly, withdrawal of the rejections based on 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, is respectfully requested.

Claims 1-2 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by DE 19613568. However, Applicants respectfully disagree with this conclusion.

In particular, Applicants direct the Examiner to paragraph [0002] on page 1 of the specification, wherein laid open specification DE 196 13 568 A1 is described. In particular, one of the disadvantages to the embodiment disclosed therein is that the fitting of the insulating cover is comparatively complex, since the cover can be distorted under the influence of temperatures that occur in the arcing zone.

The present invention overcomes these drawbacks by providing a wedge-shaped

insulating cover is provided between a contact making surface and an insulating

cover. In addition, the edges are dielectrically shielded by means of an annular bead which projects beyond the contact-making surface. The German Patent Application fails to disclose these patentable features. In particular, the German Patent Application fails to disclose the features of the wedge-shaped annular gap, which is open in the radial direction and originates from contact-making edges of the insulating covers, is provided between a contact-making surface and an insulating cover and that the edges are dielectrically shielded by means of an annular bead which projects beyond the contact-making surface, as defined in independent Claim 1. Accordingly, withdrawal of the rejection based on German Patent Application No. 19 613 568 A1 is respectfully requested.

For at least the foregoing reasons, it is submitted that the present invention, as defined in independent Claim 1, and the claims depending therefrom, is patentably distinguishable over the applied document. Accordingly, withdrawal of the rejections of record and allowance of this application are earnestly solicited.

Should any questions arise in connection with this application, or should the Examiner believe a telephone conference with the undersigned would be helpful in resolving any remaining issues remaining to this application, the undersigned respectfully requests that she be contacted at the number indicated below.

Respectfully submitted,

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